

"For Sale Cheap"

By C. H. SUTCLIFFE

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"Why don't you fellows," wrote Burt Henderson to young Weaver and Knowlton of Columbia college, "hire an auto some Saturday and come down here to see me? The old folks will make you welcome, and my sister Annette, of whom you have heard me speak, is home now. Arrange to stay over Sunday with us. We'll have a bully time."

Young Henderson was still living with his parents at their country house on Long Island and had been chummy with the two men during his days in college. The invitation was alluring. Each of the sophs had taken lessons in running an auto, the Long Island roads were known to be good, and at the end of the run was a handsome girl, as they knew by a photograph they had seen.

It was a rare chance to get out of town and do a lot of other things besides, and on a certain Saturday morning of a certain June an auto might have been seen speeding two rather hilarious young men up the island roads. The garage man had been particular when they went to hire the machine. They confessed to being timid about speed, but felt perfectly confident on all other points, and after displaying their knowledge in a practical way he had placed them in charge.

The destination was thirty miles from Brooklyn, but at a steady jog this might have been covered by noon had not something happened to prevent.

As they were passing through Jamaica, the journey only just begun, a handsome young lady emerged from a house, stepped into a steam runabout and, acting as her own chauffeur, started off at a fast clip.

"By George, but did you ever see anything to compare with her?" gasped young Weaver, who was noted as impressionable.

"Handsomest girl I ever saw," was the reply.

"Did you notice that look she threw at me?"

"It was meant for me."

"You go on! Say, I'd give all I expect to get from my grandmother's estate to know that girl. What eyes! What hair! As her eyes looked into mine for an instant!"

"She was looking into mine, and there was a roguish, defiant look in them as if she dared us to follow her."

"By George, but come to think of it, we ought to follow her anyhow. No woman has any business driving a machine. Suppose a tire comes off or anything breaks. She may meet a train at a crossing, run into a ditch or have something else happen. If we are on hand we can assist!"

More speed was put on to decrease the distance and the young lady looked back as she heard the chugging of the big machine.

"She's surely flirting with me!" gurgled young Weaver as he clasped his hands.

"You dolt!" replied young Knowlton. "She doesn't know that you are on earth. Isn't she skimming along pretty fast?"

"Seems to me she's let out a link. This is faster than we ever drove before, but we've got to take chances or lose that girl."

The girl in the runabout had several ideas on the subject in hand. One was that the two young men behind her were new to the sport. Another was that they had left the direct road in order to follow her. The third was that she would be revenged on them. She rattled along at a high speed for a mile and could see without turning her head too much that the big machine was wobbling badly and being driven by a trembling hand. On coming to where the highway separated to unite a quarter of a mile farther on, she chose the roughest way. The light-weight runabout seemed to sail over the bumps and ruts and washouts, while the larger machine had to slow down and bump its way along.

"If we lose her I'll commit suicide," said young Weaver as he hung on for dear life and grew paler every minute.

"Don't you fear that I will lose her," grimly replied Knowlton. "This is rather bumpy, but I'll stand ten miles of it for another look from those blue eyes."

"Her black eyes, you mean?"

"I mean blue. If I ever take you out into the country again may I be hanged!"

"Ditto. Because a handsome girl takes it into her head to flirt with me a bit!"

But the rest was lost in the bumping. The girl could have dropped them on that bit of road, but she made no effort. When they debouched into the main road she was in sight and jogging along at an easy pace. She had led them seven or eight miles out of their road before they realized it. Each was wishing the other would throw out a hint about abandoning the chase when the runabout, turned into a highway

that was hot macadamized. It was heavy with sand, and the auto groaned and complained as it made the steep hills.

"If she wasn't the best looking girl I ever saw"—began Knowlton.

"If she hadn't dared us to follow her"—replied Weaver.

Then there was a scream ahead of them, and a tire was seen to leave one of the wheels of the runabout and the machine to come to a standstill.

"Ye gods, but what luck for me!" whispered Weaver.

"Say, now, if you don't let me do all the talking I'll break your neck!" replied Knowlton.

When the auto came up, the girl was down on her feet inspecting damages. It was easy to see that the machine must be got home by some motive power beyond its own. There were too many stony spots on the highway to run it on the rim of the damaged wheel. Mr. Knowlton at once introduced himself and companion and tendered their services.

They found the young lady even better looking than they had given her credit for. She was not at all embarrassed over the meeting. She was chatty and vivacious, and in five minutes' talk she made them realize that she knew twice as much about an auto as they did. One thing the boys forgot until afterward. They gave their names to her, but she did not reciprocate. It was decided that the damaged machine must be drawn to the side of the road and sent for later on, while the auto was to convey the girl to her home, a distance of fourteen or fifteen miles. Why she had gone out of her way she didn't explain, and the boys didn't ask.

"As I am used to autos I shall ask the privilege of acting as chauffeur," announced the young lady as she was ready to get in.

This seemed like a reflection on the abilities of the young men, and they were hesitating over it when Miss Blank took the matter in hand. There was room for one of them beside her, and both jumped for the place at once. There was a struggle, but shame soon came to both and they humbly climbed into the rear seat and glared at each other and mentally threatened murder at the first opportunity. They soon discovered that the young lady was no vain boaster. She turned the machine about with a whizz and started off at a speed that had not continued for five minutes when young Knowlton felt compelled to lean forward and say:

"This is certainly exhilarating, but do you think it altogether safe?"

"This isn't twenty miles an hour," was the reply as the machine sailed around a curve on three wheels.

Three minutes later Mr. Weaver, whose face was growing as white as chalk and his teeth clicking together, managed to make the young lady understand that he was troubled with palpitation of the heart at times.

"Best remedy for it in the world," she replied as the machine struck a road as level and hard as a floor, and she increased the speed.

The young men instinctively clasped hands and said farewell to each other. They didn't dare reach over and twist the wheel out of the driver's hands, and yet they realized that a calamity must soon happen. A word from her might have prevented what followed, but she was intent on the road ahead. Of a sudden, as they came upon a long strip of hazel bushes, both stood up and jumped for it and landed among the bushes with a crash.

The auto did not stop. If the girl missed them she was not concerned. They picked themselves up after a while and limped out to the road in time to make inquiries of a passing team. They walked two miles and then hired a farmer to drive them six more, always inquiring for an auto driven by a girl. At length, as they drew near a manor house embosomed in a grove, young Weaver exclaimed:

"Say, now, it's dollars to cents that this is the house we were bound for—the Henderson place!"

"And if that isn't the young lady we have been chasing may I never eat again!" replied Knowlton as he nodded at a girl on the veranda.

In front of the house was an auto tied to the fence with a rope. It was their auto. Hung in a conspicuous place was a sign reading, "For Sale Cheap." The young men did not stop to ask any questions. If their friend Burt was home they did not want to see him. If his sister Annette was home they did not want to see her. All they wanted was to get back to New York by the shortest route.

Vulgarity and the Sexes.

Vulgarity is certainly commoner among men than among women, and, indeed, when a woman is vulgar she is apt to display the quality in high perfection. The reason why it is rare among women is that the emotional nature is stronger among women than among men, and thus where men are ambitious, fond of displaying power, anxious to carry out designs, desirous of recognition, women are sympathetic, tender, affectionate, subtle; they value relations with others more than performances, they encourage and console, because they are interested in the person who desires sympathy more than in the aims which he nourishes. If

one's main interest in life is in the personalities that surround one, one is not likely to be tempted by vulgarity, because the essence, again, of vulgarity is that it tends to affix an altogether fictitious value to material things. A man who pursues wealth, comfort, power, position, is always in danger of vulgarity.—A. C. Benson in Atlantic.

Peril of Erring Soldiers.

"Strange as it may seem," said a former colonel of a Manhattan regiment, "members of state military organizations will continue to violate duty calls while knowing full well that by so doing in certain instances they render themselves marked men for life. The fact is probably not generally known among citizens that a dishonorably discharged militiaman is forever barred from holding public office, whether this applies to the municipality, the commonwealth or the federal government. I know of some cases where men with dishonorable discharges have fallen to speedy ruin upon full realization of the serious consequences attaching to conduct unbecoming a soldier."—New York Press.

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A Little Different.

He—So your father asked you what you saw in me to admire? She—Oh, no; he asked me what I imagined I saw.

Tobacco Leaves.

A scientist writes: "The essential quality for which tobacco is smoked or chewed lies not really in the leaves themselves, but is contained in thousands of hollow knobbed hairs which cover their surface. The vital nicotine is garnered in these pear-like balls, but as it is impossible to shave off these hairs and would be a scarcely commendable achievement if it could be undertaken it becomes necessary to preserve the whole foliage for commercial purposes."